

DELTA AD HOC RECREATION COMMITTEE

C/o Delta Protection Commission

P.O. Box 530

Walnut Grove, CA 95690

April 14, 2000

Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director
CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Suggestions for Recreation Improvements in the Area of the South Delta
Improvements Project

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

In the August 10, 1999 letter to Lester Snow from the Delta Protection Commission and the Department of Boating and Waterways, several general categories of recreation projects, and grant programs to fund those projects, were identified. This letter includes more refined suggestions for the South Delta Improvements study area, and identifies responsible entities for each suggested improvement (noted in parentheses).

The recent passage of Propositions 12 and 13 ensures significant funds for Department of Parks and Recreation and other local entities to carry out projects which could include some of the improvements outlined in this letter, as part of the implementation of the CALFED program. The refined suggestions within this letter are largely based upon documents published in conjunction with earlier South Delta proposals and comments from members of the Delta Ad Hoc Recreation Committee.

Clifton Court Forebay – (Department of Water Resources)

The Clifton Court Forebay is currently a popular fishing area, despite the fact that it has very few recreational amenities. At the very least, this area would benefit greatly from a fishing pier, fish cleaning station, parking area, and restrooms.

There is also an opportunity to develop recreation improvements beyond the suggestions mentioned above. In 1992, Department of Parks and Recreation published a document entitled South Delta Recreation Concepts, which was developed in conjunction with Department of Water Resources' South Delta Program (which contained many of the same features that are still being considered as part of the current South Delta Improvements Team effort). Within this document, there are descriptions and diagrams of recreation improvements which could be made at Clifton Court Forebay, including campsites, a fishing pier, and a boat ramp and courtesy dock.

Franks Tract – (Department of Parks and Recreation)

With the passage of Proposition 12, an opportunity exists to implement proposals for recreation enhancements at Franks Tract, in conjunction with the ecosystem restoration which is planned for Franks Tract under CALFED's Ecosystem Restoration Program.

Big Break, Discovery Bay, Bethel Island (North), and Delta Science Center – (East Bay Regional Parks District)

The Committee recommended in earlier letters that new developing areas (such as Big Break) need to provide public access to the shoreline and other appropriate recreational facilities, such as fishing access and restrooms, as well as biking/hiking trails. Also in the Big Break area, the Delta Science Center could include an interpretive facility and recreational amenities such as restrooms and a dock, thereby enhancing its visitation and overall recreational and educational value.

Landowners and business owners on Bethel Island generally agree that a public recreation facility is needed in the north area of the island, near the Antioch Bridge. A public use facility, including a dock, pumpout, restrooms, and picnic areas, could be provided at this location.

Other General Suggestions:

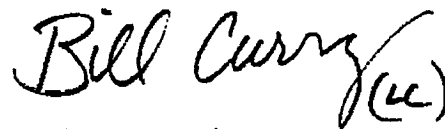
Proposed barriers: South Delta Improvements is considering different alternatives for improving water quality and circulation within South Delta channels. As the Ad Hoc Recreation Committee proposed in earlier correspondence, if barriers are proposed, the design of these barriers needs to include boat locks or other boat transport through the barriers, and should also include amenities such as fishing access, overlooks, and restrooms. The South Delta Improvements Team is also considering massive dredging and the installation of no barriers in this area – from a recreational boating standpoint, this alternative is preferred.

Middle River and Old River: The navigational barriers on Middle River north of Old River should be removed, and Middle River dredged so that it may be reopened to boating. There are several opportunities to provide recreational facilities along Middle River – a courtesy dock and picnic area at Jones Tract, and a courtesy dock and floating buoyfield at McDonald Island. A buoyfield and floating restrooms could also be provided at Mildred Island, Mandeville Tip, and along Potato and White Sloughs. On Middle River at Highway 4, a parking area for shore fishermen could be provided.

The Old River area provides opportunities for quiet water boating, including boat-in campgrounds, as described in the South Delta Recreation Concepts document.

The Ad Hoc Recreation Committee appreciates the opportunity to submit these suggestions for recreation improvements as part of the CALFED Program, and will continue to submit recommendations as more information comes available from ongoing studies. Please contact me if you have any further questions or comments on this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Curry" followed by a stylized flourish or initials in parentheses.

Bill Curry, Chairman
Delta Ad Hoc Recreation Committee